

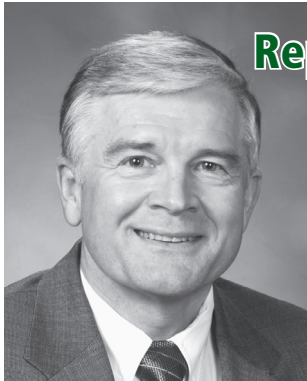
# 2007 Session Review

## • A Report to the 19th District •



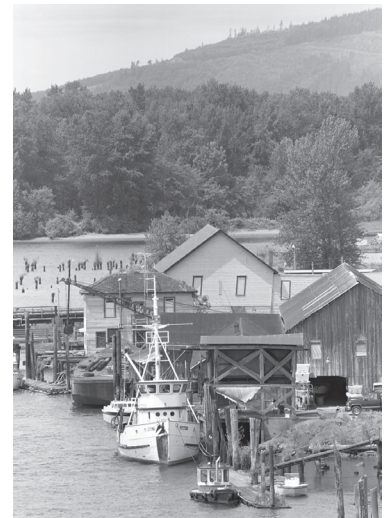
**Representative Brian Blake**

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June 2007

Dear Neighbors,

It's always an honor to serve the families and communities of Southwest and Coastal Washington. We continued our work for the district in the 2007 Session, which ended on April 22. Our priorities for the 19th District included:

- Improving local schools and education
- Building a good business climate to create and retain jobs
- Finding solutions to help more people get accessible and affordable health care

Please read on to learn more about the accomplishments on each of these priorities. Even though the legislative session is over, we want to hear from you! Please contact our offices if you have ideas, comments, or questions about the district or state government. We look forward to your message.

Sincerely,

Rep. Brian Blake

Rep. Dean Takko

**Keep in Touch** Toll-free Hotline: 1-800-562-6000  
TTY-TDD (hearing impaired): 1-800-635-9993

## Rep. Dean Takko



## Rep. Dean Takko's Bills

**Columbia Theatre:** Creates a Public Facilities District that will help restore the historic theatre in Longview. (House Bill 2388 passed, my original bill was HB 1152)

**Lodging tax for local tourism:** Allows for local governments to use lodging taxes for tourism promotion, festivals and events that draw visitors. (Senate Bill 5647 passed, I sponsored House Bill 1342)

**Small city road repairs:** Cities of 5,000 and under will get a financial boost to repair roads without a tax or fee increase. (Senate Bill 5483 passed, I sponsored the House version, HB 1482)

**Fruit and vegetable processing:** Accelerates a sales and use tax incentive for fruit and vegetable processors, allowing those companies to expand and create new jobs. (House Bill 2032)

**Tougher penalties for eluding police:** I pushed to get tough on criminals who cause law enforcement to pursue at dangerous high speeds. The bill did not pass this year, but I will work on making sure it passes in 2008. (House Bill 1030)

## Education – Our top priority

Our highest priority – as representatives, parents and community members – will always remain education. This year we invested in the future, through better funding for school construction, teachers, pupil transportation, special education, and school safety. We also:

- Opened up the door to a college degree for more students, through "Opportunity Grants."
- Gave Washington voters the right to decide if they want their school levies to pass by a simple majority. This issue will be on the ballot this fall.
- Strengthened early learning, because our youngest kids absorb knowledge quickly and we should support parents and

preschool education.

- Invested in colleges to train more math and science teachers, improved math curriculum and after-school programs, and delayed the WASL math and science requirement until 2013 so we can bring our students up to the standards.



## Jobs & Economic Growth = Prosperous communities

Southwest Washington families and communities depend on good jobs and strong growth. We passed bills this session to provide opportunities so that our cities, towns and rural areas can compete in the world and build quality of life.

- Tourism promotion – Tourism brings in over \$13 billion to Washington, but promotion of our state is lacking. We rank 47th out of 50 states in tourism funding. We reformed the way the state promotes tourism, and invested in marketing, including a local tourism grant program.
- Rural county businesses that create new jobs can get a B&O tax credit. This year we improved the tax credit, making it more accessible for rural small businesses.
- Reducing unemployment insurance rates for start-up businesses – We made the unemployment insurance contribution rate for new businesses equal to their industry average rate. The change will save start-up businesses an estimated \$10 million a year.
- Innovation Partnership Zones – We created a science park program (Innovation Partnership Zone) to build ties between colleges, labs and research-based businesses.
- Worker retraining – We improved retraining for workers through a vocational rehabilitation program.

## Local economic development

Our Economic Development Councils help retain and attract jobs. We revised their duties, increased funding and improved accountability for our regional EDCs. This is a long overdue commitment to local economic development, including the following increases for our district:

County	Current Funding (2005-07)	2007-09 Funding
Cowlitz County	\$80,000	\$191,658
Grays Harbor County	\$92,000	\$158,692
Pacific County	\$68,000	\$103,328
Wahkiakum County	\$58,000	\$84,394



# 19th District • 2007 Session Review



In our district, **agriculture and natural resources** industries play a major part in the economy. This year, the Legislature:

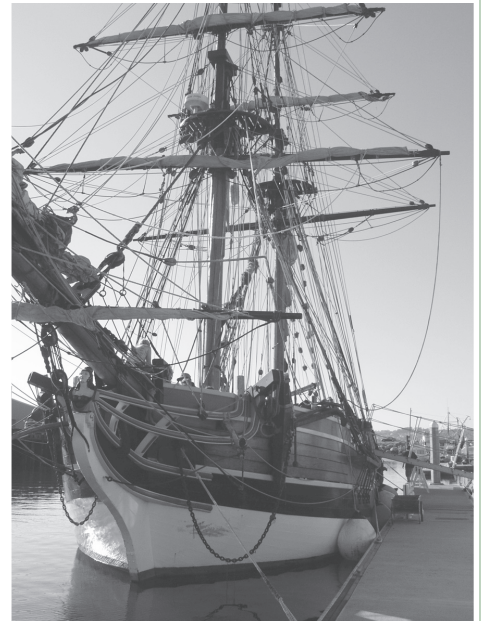
- Delivered relief to farmers who struggle with Critical Area Ordinance rules through a four-year suspension of CAO buffer rules, and laid the groundwork for a future solution.

- Exempted labor and services from sales tax for qualifying farm machinery and equipment.
- Created a Farmland Preservation Office to assist the Conservation Commission in stopping the decline of existing farmland.
- Extended the small farm and direct marketing program, so local farmers can get their products to markets and grocery stores in the area.
- Increased protections for existing farms from nuisance lawsuits.
- Passed a package of biofuels bills to improve fuel quality, exempt biodiesel from sales tax, speed up permitting for biofuel sales, and called on state agencies to use 100% biofuels by 2015.
- Bolstered funding for state parks maintenance.

## Accessible and Affordable Health Care

Nobody should go bankrupt just because they get sick. We believe employees, employers, and government must share the responsibility of affordable, quality health care. This year, we supported:

- Expanding health care coverage to 38,000 more uninsured children.
- Creating a Health Insurance Partnership between employers, employees and the state – a good first step to helping the more than 520,000 Washington adults without health care coverage.
- Helping low-income seniors hurt by Medicare Part D requirements, by covering their copayments.
- Boosting our public health system to fight infectious diseases and prepare for emergencies.



## Rep. Brian Blake's Bills

### Lady Washington –

**Our new official state ship:** We proudly passed the designation of Grays Harbor's own Lady Washington as the state ship. (House Bill 1084)

**Rockfish research:** Increases assessment of rockfish stock, which will improve commercial fishing. (House Bill 1476)

**Hunter education:** A one-year deferral of the hunter education requirement, to encourage more young hunters. (House Bill 1249)

**Protecting farmland:** Sen. Brian Hatfield's bill (5248) accomplished the goals of my House Bill 2212, to give relief to farmers from CAO rules.

**Shellfish licenses:** Makes sure shellfish licenses do not need to be visible on people harvesting shellfish or seaweed. Harvesters run the risk of losing their licenses in high winds and foul weather because of current requirements. (House Bill 1082)

## Rep. Brian Blake



# Rep. Brian Blake • Rep. Dean Takko

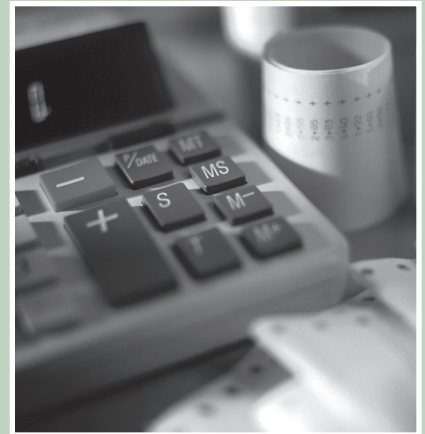
## District and Area Projects in 2007-09 Capital Budget

Columbia Theatre for the Performing Arts.....	\$750,000
Toutle River Ranch .....	\$525,000
City of Longview Mint Farm Industrial Park .....	\$1,982,000
Satsop Development Park Turbine/Admin Bldg (35th District).....	\$5,053,000
Ilwaco Community Building .....	\$2,700,000
Aberdeen Union Gospel Mission.....	\$562,000
Grays River Covered Bridge Park Land.....	\$90,000
Cowlitz Drug Treatment Center .....	\$580,000
Tokeland/North Cove Water Tank for Fire .....	\$10,000
Willapa Harbor Community Center .....	\$300,000
Cowlitz River dredging .....	\$1,000,000
Pacific County Historical Society.....	\$186,000
2006 Seaview Dunes Acquisitions.....	\$1,200,000
South Bend Nature Trail .....	\$116,790
Elk River Natural Resources Conservation Area.....	\$1,195,770
Willapa Bay Restoration .....	\$250,000
Chehalis River Surge Plain .....	\$627,299
Cape Disappointment Park Upgrade .....	\$500,000
Cape Disappointment Trail Development.....	\$500,000
Cowlitz County - Reservoir Coating - Public Works low-interest loan.....	\$340,000
Grays Harbor County Water District No. 1 Water System Rehabilitation - Public Works low-interest loan.....	\$6,717,575
<b>Grays Harbor College:</b> (including Child Care Facility, Science and Math Building, and repairs).....	\$2,253,228
<b>Lower Columbia College:</b> (including Health and Science Building and repairs) .....	\$3,455,237

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## BUDGET

As fellow citizens, we're concerned about how our state spends money. We voted to create a "rainy day" fund that puts one percent of the state's revenue, every fiscal year, into an emergency account, accessible only with three-fifths vote of the Legislature, economic downturn or natural disaster.



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